

1st TORCH Annual Open Forum

Sustainability in a (post?) pandemic world: asking the right question on the role of Universities in R&I today

#TORCHForum2022

2 March 2022 / Online

Registrations available at: <https://forms.office.com/r/q6HdBAuA7f>

Host institution: Eötvös Loránd University Budapest

Concept note

While experts' opinions are significantly different regarding the remaining threat of COVID-19, everyone agrees that the pandemic has permanently changed the world around us from many different aspects and for many different sectors. As we work to shape our future and deal with many societal challenges, how can universities and European Universities alliances contribute to a European internal market for knowledge and maximize the impact of R&I in a (post?) pandemic world for a better, inclusive and sustainable future? In exploring the role that R&I can play, consideration needs to be given to the importance of strengthening cooperation throughout the entire knowledge square (Education-Research-Innovation-Business & Society) utilising a responsible research and Innovation framework that is fit for purpose.

Exploring synergies and facilitating best practice exchanges with other European Universities alliances who are addressing these same challenges will facilitate all HEIs to support innovative solutions for a greener and digital transition¹ paving the way out from the pandemic crisis in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Such sharing of knowledge also supports the values and current policy agenda of the new European Research Area Research and development personnel are at the heart of R&I systems and if the research process is undergoing change, becoming more collaborative and open, then we must look also at the current research assessment system so that researchers are assessed on the basis of appropriate criteria. Research assessment reform, such as that

¹ This objective aims to support the European Commission's [Strategic Plan 2020-2024 DG Research and Innovation](#) in which states that "the R&I policy is an engine of the green and digital transitions on the continent and stairways to 'the future we want'."

underway in the EU as well as being addressed through the transformational modules by many alliances, can contribute to the process of supporting the development of attractive and sustainable research careers in Europe maximising the possibility of supporting and retaining the best talent needed to design innovative solutions to societal challenges.

During the Forum we will address issues such as:

- What are the challenges in Research assessment reform, how is the EU approaching it and what can we learn from the work of the European Universities alliances?
- Sharing learning and discussion on how European University alliances can impact a sustainable future through a common R&I Agenda and the role that such a common agenda may play in achieving the European Green Deal and more broadly contributing to the implementation of the SDGs
- How can Universities and alliances better work with Enterprises and with citizens
- The importance of cross cutting principles such as Ethics, integrity, interdisciplinary, gendered innovation in responsible research and the challenges in developing common implementation approaches by alliances.

The first TORCH Open Forum will foster an in-depth discussion around these perspectives. The Annual Forum will be followed by a policy brief on the development of recommendations and roadmap for the progress of a common EU Research and Innovation Agenda with clear priorities and actions.

Participants

The TORCH Forum is addressed for all university leadership and for those actors engaged in R&I, university-industry-citizen collaboration. It is also relevant for policymakers, as the European Commission's perspective will be included.

AGENDA

10:00 – 10:30 Opening ceremony / Welcome address

Presenter: Prof. Enikő MAGYARI

- Hungarian Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Dr. László PALKOVICS (video message)
- Prof. Dr. László BORHY. Rector. Eötvös Loránd University
- Prof. Dr. Jordi Garcia, Vice-Rector of Research, University of Barcelona
- Message from Prof. Stefan Müller-Stach, Vice President for Research at JGU Mainz, FIT FORTHEM coordinator read by dr Nicole Birkle, FIT FORTHEM managing coordinator

10:30 - 11:30 Plenary session | R&I trends in the (post?) pandemic scenarios

Introduction to the R&I framework and the (post?) pandemic scenarios. This session will host keynote speakers in a discussion regarding R&I impact during and after the pandemic (state of play and looking forward).

Presenter: Prof. Enikő MAGYARI

- Ms Apostolia *KARAMALI*. Head of Unit. DG Research and Innovation. European Commission
- Csilla Stéger, Manager at PwC Hungary Ltd. Government Advisory, division responsible for HE–government relationships

11:30 – 11:45 Short break

11:45 - 12:30 Panel session | European universities: Towards a reform of the research assessment system

A reform of the research assessment system for research, researchers and institutions to improve their quality, performance and impact was called out as a priority area for joint action in the ERA policy agenda 2022-2024 which was approved as part of the Council conclusions on the future government of the ERA on 26th November 2021. This session will discuss the rationale, the proposed approach and principles and work to date, analysing the challenges and benefits to reforming such a multi-actor system to support a diverse range of outputs, activities and career directions. The panel will also look at the role that the European Universities initiative can play in driving such reform and considers whether there are benefits for teaching and other activities outside of research.

Presenter: Prof. Enikő MAGYARI

Chaired by: Doris Alexander. Trinity College Dublin

Rapporteur:

- Ludovic Thilly. Chair of the Executive Board. Coimbra Group
- EPICUR

- ARQUS
- Prof. Dr. F. Miedema. Vice Rector Research, Utrecht University. TORCH (CHARM-EU)

12:30-13:30 Lunch Break

13:30 – 15:00 TORCH Clusters | Crosscutting conversations across R&I topics and sustainability

These sessions seek to combine R&I impact/actions and sustainable factors. It will help to enhance policy coherence by promoting systemic approaches across the same challenges (SDGs/European Green Deal) while presenting main progresses on the TORCH project.

Cluster 1: R&I Common Science Agenda and European Universities

Best practices and scenarios for bridging institutional, regional, cultural and regulatory differences in the process of developing common strategies, agendas and future research projects

Rapporteur: Jaime Llorca (UB)

Speakers

- Albert Diaz. TORCH (CHARM-EU). University of Barcelona
- Katarzyna Molek-Kozakowska, Maria Pitarch. FIT FORTHEM, University of Opole, Poland, University of Valencia, Spain
- EELISA

Cluster 2: Business & Society and academic cooperation

Based on these good experiences/best cases, how to go beyond and improve even more the cooperation between academia and Business and Society

Chair: Inese Rozensteine. TORCH (CHARM-EU). University of Montpellier

Rapporteur: Elea Pippo. TORCH (CHARM-EU) University of Montpellier.

Speakers :

- Benoît Bardy. University of Montpellier. With the project BEAT HEALTH, a musical application for the rehabilitation of Parkinson's patients and the training of athletes
- Best practices Eötvös Loránd University
- Dr. Anicet Blanch. University of Barcelona. Founder and CTO of Bluephage (a biotechnological company specialized in producing testing kits to identify faecal and viral indicators within water
- Rasa Viederyte, EU-CONEXUS RFS-Research for Society Manager. Klaipeda University, Lithuania.
- Josep Bordonau, Juan Jesús Pérez. UNITE!

Cluster 3: Public engagement

Public engagement and transdisciplinary science are key in realising Open Science and in engaging societal actors in the generation and use of (scientific) knowledge. Many universities around the globe, including European universities and their alliances, are navigating their way to develop an understanding of these concepts, and to integrate these into their core mandates and operationalize these in both research and education. What are the current modalities and good practices for stimulating public engagement and transdisciplinary science? And what are the incentives and disincentives in doing so? During this session, we explore some of the good practices and (dis)incentives for public engagement and transdisciplinary science at the individual level, the university level, the systemic levels, and the level of stakeholders. We invite a variety of speakers representing these different levels and engage in a discussion of existing opportunities and challenges and explore future steps to reach and/or push the boundaries of Open Science.

Chair: Dr. Marjanneke Vijge, CHARM-EU. Utrecht University
Rapporteur: Kirsten Hollaender (UU)

Speakers:

- Dr. Annisa Triyanti, TORCH. Utrecht University. Presenting the findings from WP7 on (dis)incentives for public engagement and transdisciplinary science
- Olga Wessels. ECIU
- Prof. Tomas Berkamanas. T4ERI (T4Europe)

Cluster 4: Cross-cutting principles to address a transformative R&I Agenda

The TORCH Project arises to strengthen CHARM-EU's academic and research networks by promoting a challenge-driven transformative agenda with a transdisciplinary and intercultural vision. At the Project's foundation lies Responsible Research & Innovation: three cross-cutting principles of Gendered Innovation, Ethics & Integrity, and Interdisciplinarity/Transdisciplinarity. These principles are strongly connected with four other areas of the Project: Common R&I agenda; Cooperation with Non-academic Actors; Open Science Practices; and Citizen Science & Public Engagement. The research the CHARM-EU alliance intends to strive towards will be based on the common strengths of the alliance institutions; it will involve cooperation with non-academic stakeholders; it will involve Open Science practices; and it will engage with citizen science and public engagement. The three cross-cutting principles are present throughout all these aspects of research. Developing a common European research framework in different countries and cultures and across a number of different disciplines requires addressing the challenges of ensuring ethically fully supported interdisciplinary research while incorporating cross-cutting principles analysis into all areas of R&I processes including career choices and opportunities as well as research project development and management. Having established our research strengths, we ask, how can we make our research even better?

Chair: Gemma Marfany, TORCH (CHARM-EU). University of Barcelona

Rapporteur: Jędrzej Olejniczak. FORTHEM

Speakers:

- Lorraine Leeson. TORCH (CHARM-EU). Trinity College Dublin.
- EU4ART
- Mireille Stijns. Leading of the community-engaged research and innovation (CERI) work package in YUFERING (YUFE)

15:00 – 15:30 Short break

15:30 – 16:30 Panel about open science

In this panel, three alliances, CIVIS, AURORA and CHARM-EU, will introduce the Open Science practices and plans of their current SWAF projects.

Presenter: Prof. Enikő MAGYARI

Chair: Dr. Aczél Balázs Zoltán (ELTE)

Rapporteur: Anikó Gal-Belteki (ELTE)

Speakers:

- Mihnea Dobre, researcher and affiliate Professor at the Humanities Division of the University of Bucharest, and he is also the leader of the module on Open Science within RIS4CIVIS.
- Sander Bosch. AURORA
- CHARM-EU

16:30 Closing